

Our Financial Specialists



Stephensons

legal services the way you want them

Stephensons Solicitors LLP ranks among the top 50 UK law firms and is one of the largest and fastest growing practices in the North West, with over 450 staff across a network of seven regional offices.

Our family department is the largest in the North West with over 25 specialist solicitors who can help with all relationship problems. Our solicitors understand the financial and child care issues that arise from a relationship breakdown and are committed to handling all cases sympathetically but focus on working with you to achieve an outcome in the most cost effective way with practical solutions to disputes. We will always endeavour to work around your personal circumstances, budget and time frame.

To ensure all our clients have the best all round support, we can give you access to specialists within our firm to help with matters relating to the family home or business, as well as advising on issues such as wills and trusts. We also enjoy close relationships with professionals in other fields such as financial services, accountancy and counselling to support the planning process for your future.

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Each individual separation and financial settlement is different and the service of an experienced and understanding solicitor is likely to prove invaluable for what may be a very distressing time. This booklet will guide you through our field of experts who can assist you with the financial aspects following divorce.

In order to be able to fully advise you in relation to a division of assets, the starting point is to have full disclosure of all the financial information concerning the couple.

Agreements can be reached between the parties direct or with assistance from us or via mediation, collaborative law or through Court proceedings. It is important that we work in partnership with you in deciding which method of resolution is the most appropriate. If a couple agree a settlement between themselves it is always important to get the agreement embodied in a Court Order to ensure that both parties are legally bound by the terms of the agreement and to prevent any future claims being made.

Every settlement is different and will require a solution to suit the individual needs and resources involved.

Mike Devlin, Managing Partner of Family/Care

Mike is the managing partner of Stephenson's Family department across the firm's seven regional offices, and he oversees the financial team at the Manchester office. He is renowned as a leader in the field of law relating to children, and has been a member of the Law Society Children Panel since its inception in 1984.

Mike has a very busy practice representing parents, children, local authorities and other interested parties in care proceedings, adoption cases, residence and contact disputes, applications in wardship and the exercise of Inherent Jurisdiction of the High Court.

Mike is based at our Manchester office.
You can contact him at:

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T: 0161 8328844
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E: mdd@stephensons.co.uk



Amanda Rimmer, Partner

Mandy is the department manager for Wigan's Family team.

Mandy qualified as a solicitor in 1993 and joined Stephenson's Family Law department straight away, where she has specialised ever since.

She is an accredited member of the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Children Panel as a Children Representative, and is also one of a limited number of members of the Family Law Accreditation Scheme (Advanced). In addition, Mandy is a member of Resolution, a national organisation of solicitors which share the same commitment to promoting a non-confrontational approach to family problems and which considers the needs of the whole family, in particular the best interests of the children.

Her interests and specialist areas lie in disputes concerning the division of family assets during separation and issues concerning the arrangements for children.

Mandy is based at our Wigan office and you can contact her at:

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Karen Atkins, Partner

Karen is the department manager of the St Helens Family team.

Karen is a member of Resolution and an accredited specialist in areas relating to finance and children. She is also the treasurer of the Merseyside Resolution Committee.

Karen completed her BA Honours degree at Nottingham University and attended Nottingham Law school before joining Stephensons in May 1996. She qualified as a solicitor in 1999 and was appointed a partner in May 2006.

Karen represents parents in residence and contact disputes and deals with cases involving domestic violence, and she specialises in financial matters arising out of divorce.

Karen is a trained Collaborative lawyer and is a committee member of Collaborative Law Merseyside.

Karen is based at our St Helens office and you can contact her at:

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Victoria Melling, Associate Solicitor

Victoria is the department manager of the Bolton Family team. She initially worked as a graduate clerk in the Conveyancing department before completing a training contract in March 2001. Victoria was made an associate in 2003 and currently manages the Family department in Bolton.

The Family team at Bolton is able to advise on all aspects following the breakdown of a relationship but Victoria particularly enjoys dealing with financial settlements after a divorce or separation. She is experienced in handling complex high value cases involving businesses and pensions.

Victoria can also deal with the transferring and re-mortgaging of any properties after divorce, meaning clients can obtain a comprehensive service from just one solicitor.

Victoria is on the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Family Law Accreditation Scheme and is a member of Resolution.

Victoria can be contacted at:

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Christopher Fairhurst, Associate Solicitor

Chris is a member of the Family department who joined Stephensons in December 2006 and was appointed an associate in May 2008.

Since specialising in Family Law in 1995, Chris has found a real interest in the law relating to all aspects of relationship breakdown, but has developed a particular specialism in financial disputes and settlements between separating and divorcing couples, which currently consists of the majority of his workload. Chris also deals with cases relating to children, which has seen him representing many parents and family members in Care, Residence and Contact Applications.

Chris is a Resolution Accredited Specialist with particular specialisms in Financial Provision and Children Law, as well as a Children Panel Accreditation Scheme Member - Children Representative and is one of less than 100 lawyers in the country to hold such a dual qualification.

Chris is based at our Wigan office where he can be contacted at:

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Lynda Flynn, Associate Solicitor

Lynda's career at Stephensons began in May 1995 when she was a graduate clerk in the Family department. She qualified as a solicitor in 1997 and has since worked in all areas of family law, including children matters, private and public law, domestic violence, divorce and financial settlements.

Lynda specialises in financial matters arising out of divorce and private law Children Act matters.

Lynda was appointed an associate of Stephensons in 2002 and is based at our St. Helens office where she can be contacted at:

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Charlotte Faid, Associate Solicitor

Charlotte joined Stephenson's in 1996 as an office junior and has since progressed through the firm to qualify as a solicitor. She graduated with her BA Honours Degree in Law with Politics from the University of Central Lancashire in 2000 and went on to study the Legal Practice course at Nottingham Trent University. Charlotte completed her training contract and qualified as a solicitor in 2003.

Charlotte was appointed an associate of the firm in 2008. Charlotte deals with all areas of relationship breakdown, specialising in private children law cases, family injunctions and the financial consequences of divorce. She is also a member of Resolution.

Charlotte is based at our St. Helens office. She can be contacted at:

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Ceri Thomas, Solicitor

After completing her Law degree at Glamorgan University, Ceri obtained a diploma in legal practice at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Ceri began work at Stephensons in 2001 in the Conveyancing department. She joined the Family department in 2002 while undertaking the Legal Practice course. She went on to complete a training contract with the firm and qualified into the Family department at the Manchester office in September 2005.

Since qualification, Ceri has worked in both the Manchester and Leigh offices and she specialises exclusively in family law, in particular, the law relating to financial matters arising out of divorce.

Ceri also represents parents in residence/contact disputes and deals with cases involving domestic violence. Ceri is a member of Resolution and sits on the Young Resolution Committee in Manchester.

Ceri is based at our Leigh office and you can contact her at:

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Joanne Murray, Associate Solicitor

Joanne studied at Northumbria University and has been a member of Stephensons since her graduation in 2001. She qualified into the Civil Litigation department in 2003 and since then, she has specialised in financial disputes between co-habiting couples.

Joanne can also prepare agreements for and advise those setting up home together to avoid any dispute in the future.

Joanne is based at our Leigh office and she can be contacted at:

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